

My name is Shidi Scheer, and I am here on behalf of my beautiful son Lannon who is six years old and diagnosed with autism. When you listen to my words I would like you to imagine that I am speaking about your child, grandchild, or dear friend. When you hear the diagnosis of autism it is devastating in itself, but to hear that there are proven treatments and therapies that are not covered by insurance companies it is like telling the parents of a starving child, that they cannot have the food they need to live. We have been fortunate enough to obtain amazing improvements with our son, but they have come at a tremendous cost, not just financially, but emotionally as well. They have forced us to use his money for college, go into debt, and feel helpless and desperate when we hear of a therapy that we cannot afford.

You need to know that there are so many ways to improve these children's lives! Our son went from hardly being able to speak, and pushing and biting other children, to a child that could fully communicate, behave appropriately, and read three grade levels above his peers.

We are self-employed and pay \$1100.00 a month for insurance that we are unable to use for our son - that in itself, creates an amazing amount of frustration for our family, and thousands of families throughout this state. We have spent over 50,000 to heal our son and we still have a ways to go!

I call upon the law makers of this state to make the necessary changes in our health insurance policies so that the children in Michigan who have autism can get the help they so desperately need to improve the

quality of their lives. It is you, that has the awesome ability to make these changes, and we need your support now! You can change these children's lives forever and help them to become healthy, happy, and productive members of our society!

I would like to thank representatives Kathy Angerer and Richard Ball for bringing these bills to the forefront of our discussion today and for believing in children with autism spectrum disorders.

The passing of these two bills will help our son reach his full potential and will open the doors to many families who are in need of treatments for their loved ones. Looking the other way will be turning your back on thousands of loving children who are crying out for help!

I thank everyone involved for making this insurance reform happen!

Sincerely,
Alicia Scheer
Mannon's mom



